

(b) whether there is any proposal to review the current policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) Under the existing legal framework, Government companies alone can undertake coal mining for commercial purposes. By an amendment in 1976 to the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973, two exceptions to policy were introduced viz., (i) captive mining by private companies engaged in production of iron and steel and (ii) sub-lease for coal mining to private parties in isolated small pockets not amenable to economic development and not requiring rail transport. The Act was further amended in 1993 to allow coal mining for captive consumption for generation of power washing of coal obtained from a mine and other end uses to be notified by Government from time to time. By a Notification issued on 15.03.1996, captive mining of coal for production of cement was allowed. A Bill, namely, the Coal Mines (Nationalization) Amendment Bill, 2000 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha in April 2000 seeking to allow coal mining by private sector companies without the existing restriction of captive mining.

MoU for setting up power project at Pipavav, Gujarat

1646. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Gujarat and NTPC have signed an MoU for setting up of 1000 MW Power Project at Pipavav in joint venture;

(b) if so, the present status of the project;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the project is held up due to non-allotment of Coal Mining Block to NTPC by the Ministry of Coal;

(d) if so, the reasons for the delay in allotment of the Coal Mining Block to NTPC; and

(e) by when the Coal Mining Block is likely to be allotted to NTPC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. An MoU has been signed by National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) with Gujarat Power Corporation

Limited (GPCL) and Gujarat Electricity Board (GEB) for setting up a 1000 MW Power project at Pipavav in Amreli District of Gujarat as a 50:50 Joint venture Project of NTPC and GPCL/agencies of Govt. of Gujarat based on techno-economic feasibility which is to be carried out for selection of optimum fuel. NTPC in consultation with GPCL has taken up various site specific studies to prepare the Feasibility Report.

(c) No, Sir. The following 6 coal blocks have already been allocated to NTPC to meet the requirement of their future power plants:

1. Pakri-Barwadi
2. Talai-Palli
3. Kerandari
4. Chatti-Bariatu
5. Chhatrasal
6. Dulanga

In addition to above, two more coal blocks viz. (1) Brahmani and (2) Chichro Patsimal have been allocated for Joint Venture between NTPC and CIL to meet additional requirement of power plants.

However, in September 2006, Government of Gujarat conveyed its decision stating that the project would be developed based on imported coal or any other suitable fuel in collaboration with a strategic partner. NTPC Limited and GPCL were advised to amicably settle issues relating to expenditure so far on the project for land, studies etc. Accordingly, NTPC Limited is not pursuing the project further.

(d) and (e) Do not arise in view of reply at (c) above.

Additional value based services to the BSNL and MTNL customers

1647. SHRI THENNALA G. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Department has any proposal for additional services of value based in the landline of BSNL and MTNL for its customers;